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determining if a copy of the requested reference material is available, wherein
determining if the copy of the requested reference material is available includes
determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference
material;

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passing the token if the copy of the requested reference material is available;
providing access to the copy of the requested reference material if the requested
reference material is available; and
temporarily denying access to the requested reference material if the requested
reference material is not available.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein providing access to the copy of
the requested reference material includes transmitting the copy of the requested reference
material as a digital electronic file.

3. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein providing access to the copy of
the requested reference material includes transmitting the copy of the requested reference
material as HTML.

4. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein providing access to the copy of
the requested reference material includes transmitting the copy of the requested reference
material as HTML including a client side agent programmed to provide an indication
when the transmitted copy of the requested reference material has been replaced.

5. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

receiving an indication when access to the copy of the requested material is terminated.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
~~passing a token if a copy of the requested material is available; and~~
receiving an indication in the form of a return of the token when access to the copy of the requested material is terminated.

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7. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
monitoring a client side browser to determine when an image of the requested reference materials has been replaced.

8. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
monitoring a client side browser to determine when the client side browser has been idle for a prescribed period of time.

9. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein determining if a copy of the requested reference material is available includes comparing a number of copies of the requested reference materials to which access is currently being provided with a maximum number of copies of the requested reference materials for which access can contractually be provided.

10. (canceled without prejudice)

11. (currently amended) A method of providing access to reference materials, comprising:

providing view access to a requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on an unlimited basis;

a! providing view access to the requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and a number of requesters currently having view access to the requested reference material is less than a defined maximum number of concurrent viewers for the requested reference material, wherein providing view access to the requested reference material when the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis comprises

determining if the requested reference material is available, including determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material, and

passing the token if the requested reference material is available; and

temporarily denying view access to the requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and the number of requesters currently having view access to the requested reference material is at least equal to the defined maximum number of concurrent viewers for the requested reference material.

12. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

receiving an indication from a client side agent in the form of a return of a token when the copy of the requested reference material has been replaced in a client side browser.

13. (original) The method of claim 11, further comprising:

transmitting a client side agent from a server to a client requesting the requested reference material; and

receiving an indication from the client side agent when the copy of the requested reference material has been replaced in a client side browser.

14. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein the requested reference

material is at least one of a text segment, a video segment and an audio segment.

15. (currently amended) A method of providing access to reference material, comprising:

receiving a request for on-line access to a reference material from a requester; determining if the requested reference material is made available on limited basis or on an unlimited basis;

if the requested reference material is made available on an unlimited basis, providing on-line access to the requested reference material for the requester;

if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis, determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, wherein determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently

checked out comprises determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material;

if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and all copies of the requested reference material are not currently checked out, passing the token if the copy of the requested reference material is available and providing on-line access to the requested material for the requester; and

a! if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, temporarily denying on- line access to the requested material for the requester.

16. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out includes determining whether a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference materials.

17. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein providing on-line access to the requested material for the requester includes transmitting a computer-readable copy of the requested material to a requester's computer.

18. (original) The method of claim 15, further comprising:
receiving an indication when the requester has finished accessing the requested material.

19. (original) The method of claim 15, further comprising: passing possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material from a server to

the requester each time that on-line access to the requested material for the requester is provided if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis;

receiving an indication in the form of a return of the token corresponding to the requested reference material each time the requester has finished accessing the requested material.

20. (currently amended) A method of providing access to materials, comprising:

providing a limited access collection of reference materials made available as on-line copies to requesting users on a limited basis, wherein providing the limited access collection of reference to requesting users on a limited basis comprises determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to at least one of requested reference materials in the limited access collection and passing the token to a requesting user along with the at least one requested reference material if the copy of the requested reference material is available;

providing an unlimited access collection of reference materials made available as on-line copies to requesting users on an unlimited basis;

allowing only a central authority to update the limited access collection of reference materials; and

allowing users to update the unlimited access collection of reference materials.

21. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein allowing only a central authority to update the limited access collection of reference materials includes allowing

only the central authority to add additional reference materials to the limited access collection of reference materials.

22. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein allowing only a central authority to update the limited access collection of reference materials includes allowing only the central authority to modify at least one of the additional reference materials in the limited access collection of reference materials.

a' 23. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein allowing users to update the unlimited access collection of reference materials includes allowing users to add additional reference materials to the unlimited access collection of reference materials.

24. (original) The method of claim 20 wherein allowing users to update the unlimited access collection of reference materials includes allowing users to modify at least one of the additional reference materials in the unlimited access collection of reference materials.

25. (original) The method of claim 20, further comprising:
providing a user interface for requesting one or more of the reference materials as on-line copies.

26. (currently amended) The method of claim 20, further comprising:
receiving a request for on-line access to a reference material from a requester;

determining if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials or the unlimited access collection of reference materials;

if the requested reference material is in the unlimited access collection of reference materials, providing on-line access to the requested reference material for the requester;

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if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection, determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, wherein determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out comprises determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material;

if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials and all copies of the requested reference material are not currently checked out, passing the token if the copy of the requested reference material is available and providing on-line access to the requested material for the requester; and

if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials and all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, temporarily denying on-line access to the requested material for the requester.

27. (currently amended) A system for providing access to reference materials, comprising:

a limited access collection of reference materials, the reference materials in the limited access collection of reference materials being made available on a limited basis;

an unlimited access collection of reference materials, the reference materials in the unlimited access collection of reference materials being made available on an unlimited basis;

an interface that receives on-line requests for one or more of the reference materials; and

a processor programmed to:

determine if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials or the unlimited access collection of reference materials;

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if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection,
determine if the requested reference material is available by, in part, determining if a
server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material;

if the requested reference material is in the unlimited access collection of reference materials, provide on-line access to the requested reference material for the requester;

if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection, determine if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out;

if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials and all copies of the requested reference material are not currently checked out, pass the token if the copy of the requested material is available and provide on-line access to the requested material for the requester; and

if the requested reference material is in the limited access collection of reference materials and all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, temporarily deny on-line access to the requested material for the requester.

28. (original) The system of claim 27 wherein the reference materials include at least one of video materials, audio materials, and textual materials.

29. (currently amended) A system for providing access to reference materials, comprising:

a limited access collection of reference materials, the reference materials in the limited access collection of reference materials being made available on a limited basis;

a¹ an unlimited access collection of reference materials, the reference materials in the unlimited access collection of reference materials being made available on an unlimited basis;

an interface that receives on-line requests for one or more of the reference materials; and

a processor programmed to:

allow only a central authority to provide additional reference materials for inclusion as part of the limited access collection of reference materials;

if the additional reference materials are included as part of the limited access collection, determine if the requested reference material is available by, in part, determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference material;

pass the token to a requester if the copy of the requested reference material is available and provide on-line access to the requested material for the requester; and

allow users to provide additional reference materials for inclusion as part of the unlimited access collection of reference materials.

30. (currently amended) A computer-readable media that causes a computer to provide controlled access to reference materials, by:

receiving an on-line request for a reference material;

determining if a copy of the requested reference material is available, wherein
determining if a copy of the requested reference material is available includes
determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the requested reference
material;

passing the token if the copy of the requested reference material is available;

providing access to the copy of the requested reference material if the requested reference material is available; and

temporarily denying access to the requested reference material if the requested reference material is not available.

31. (currently amended) A computer-readable media that causes a computer to provide controlled access to reference materials, by:

providing view access to a requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on an unlimited basis;

providing view access to the requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and a number of requesters currently having view access to the requested reference material is less than a defined maximum number of concurrent viewers for the requested reference material, wherein
providing view access to the requested reference material when the requested reference
material is made available on a limited basis comprises

determining if a copy of the requested reference material is available,
including determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the
requested reference material, and

passing the token if the copy of the requested reference material is
available; and

temporarily denying view access to the requested reference material if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and the number of requesters currently having view access to the requested reference material is at least equal to the defined maximum number of concurrent viewers for the requested reference material.

a 32. (currently amended) A computer-readable media that causes a computer to provide controlled access to reference materials, by:

receiving a request for on-line access to a reference material from a requester;
determining if the requested reference material is made available on limited basis or on an unlimited basis;

if the requested reference material is made available on an unlimited basis,
providing on-line access to the requested reference material for the requester;

if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis,
determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out,
wherein determining if all copies of the requested reference material are currently check
out comprises determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the
requested reference material;

if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and all copies of the requested reference material are not currently checked out, passing the token if the requested reference material is available and providing on-line access to the requested material for the requester; and

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if the requested reference material is made available on a limited basis and all copies of the requested reference material are currently checked out, temporarily denying on- line access to the requested material for the requester.

33. (currently amended) A computer-readable media that causes a computer to provide controlled access to reference materials, by:

providing a limited access collection of reference materials made available as on-line copies to requesting users on a limited basis, wherein providing the limited access collection of reference materials made available as on-line copies to requesting users on a limited basis comprises

determining if reference material is available by, in part, determining if a server has possession of a token corresponding to the reference materials, and passing the token if the copy of the reference material is available;

providing an unlimited access collection of reference materials made available as on-line copies to requesting users on an unlimited basis;

allowing only a central authority to provide update the limited access collection of reference materials; and

allowing users to provide update the unlimited access collection of reference materials.